

# Regional Council Activity Report

April 3, 2001

Briefing to Member Agencies from Executive Director James M. Bourey



## Executive Director's Report

In our journey toward a new Regional Transportation Plan, the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) has just completed a first major step: the conclusion of a series of expert panel forums examining the forces shaping our region. National and regional experts joined us to look at the various underpinnings of the region that will affect transportation in the future. Factors such as an aging population, changing demographics, advances in technology, land use and environmental issues will all have a significant effect on our travel patterns and on the types of transportation systems needed in the future. The discussions were thought-provoking and stimulating. Here is just a sampling of the findings and ideas brought forward during the series:

- Maricopa County will continue to experience major population increases and is expected to grow from about 3 million in 2001 to 6.3 million in 2040. The continued fast growth poses challenges for both the core cities and those on the urban edge.
- The senior population will continue to grow with the aging of baby boomers, creating challenges in providing safe mobility options for senior drivers.
- Total vehicle miles of travel in Phoenix are projected to increase by 140 percent by the Year 2040. A 50 percent decrease in freeway and arterial speeds may occur by that year.
- The New Economy and globalization are having increasingly profound effects on the growth of U.S. cities and their surrounding suburbs. In the New Economy, the competitive advantage of regions has shifted to those that can generate, retain and attract the best talent.
- Employment in Greater Phoenix is projected to increase faster than national growth rates. But the region may not prosper if more emphasis is not put on attracting high-wage, high-quality jobs.
- Environmental and resource issues are critically linked to future urban growth patterns and the supporting transportation systems growth requires.
- Efforts to address an increase in vehicle miles traveled and continued progress in reducing vehicle emissions is critical to improving air quality.

- The quality of the region's water supply is potentially vulnerable to deterioration through over-consumption.
- Land use should be the chicken, transportation the egg when it comes to developing regional infrastructure. The two are inextricably linked.
- Intelligent transportation systems may significantly affect the way we travel in the future. Imagine no more auto accidents thanks to cars that sense each other and automatically stay apart...or a car that drops you off at the curb, then returns itself to the airport.
- Until residents understand the connection between their own personal lifestyle decisions and growth, sprawl will continue to happen.
- Cooperation around the development of a water delivery system created this region. Continued regional cooperation is crucial to its continued success.

These are only a few of the ideas expressed during the five forums. Comprehensive issue papers on each subject area are being drafted, and will be used in the development of the new Regional Transportation Plan. I'd like to express my thanks to our many fine panelists, our staff for all of their hard work, and most of all to those who attended for making these forums a tremendous success.

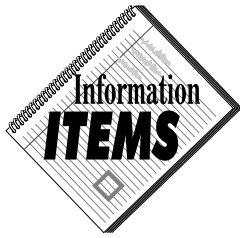


## **Regional Council Meeting Report for March 28, 2001**

### **Council approves TIP and Plan for Conformity Analysis**

The MAG Regional Council has approved the FY 2002-2006 Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Draft MAG Long Range Transportation Plan Summary and 2001 Update for air quality conformity analysis. The TIP serves as a five-year regional guide for the preservation, management and expansion of public transportation services, including highways, ride-sharing, transit facilities and various congestion mitigation and air quality improvement projects. The Long Range Transportation Plan serves as the guide for the system over the next 20 years. Items addressed in the update include incorporation of the Regional Off-Street System Plan and an updated funding plan. Planned expansions to roadways and services in the Plan include an 89 percent increase in freeway/expressway miles, a tripling of local bus services, a quadrupling of express and commuter bus service, and a 39-mile light rail transit system.

**For more information contact Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Manager, (602) 254-6300.**



## Information Items

### **Hundreds Provide Input During Mid-Phase Public Input Opportunity**

Approximately 630 people provided input in a variety of ways during the MAG Mid-Phase public input opportunity. The mid-phase process, which began in February, provides for input on initial plan analysis for the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program.

One of the first opportunities for input during the mid-phase was a "MAG at the Mall" event held at Metrocenter Mall in February. MAG and ADOT shared a display booth which featured surveys and other information on transportation plans and programs. Several thousand people passed by the displays over the two days. About 500 mall-goers stopped to ask questions and answer surveys, and to play the MAG regional trivia game "Are You A MAG Mastermind?"

Other opportunities for input during the mid-phase included a Transportation Fair at the Central Station Transit Center, a booth at the Northwest Black History Committee 5th Annual Black History Festival, and a Joint Agency Open House and Public Hearing. A summary of all comments received during the mid-phase are recorded in the FY 2001 Mid-Phase Input Opportunity Report. **For more information contact Kelly Taft, MAG Communications Manager, at (602) 254-6300.**



## Upcoming Issues

### **MAG Undergoes Triennial Certification Review**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will be conducting a transportation planning certification review of the Phoenix area transportation planning process. On Tuesday, April 17, 2001, a public meeting will be offered from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. at the MAG offices for any members of the public who would like to provide perspective on the transportation planning process in the Phoenix area.

MAG cordially invites all transportation stakeholders to come share their thoughts and ideas about our efforts in the region with members of the federal agencies who oversee our transportation planning process.

**For more information contact Kelly Taft, MAG Communications Manager, (602) 254-6300.**



## **Upcoming Events**

### **MAG to Host Booth at Sunday on Central**

More than 100,000 people are expected to saunter along Central Avenue this Sunday, April 8th, for the 11th annual "Sunday on Central" street festival. The free event will be held from noon to 6:00 p.m. on Central Avenue between Osborn Road and Virginia Avenue. The festival will feature music, jugglers, stilt walkers, clowns, and of course, the MAG booth, which will entice the crowd with the "Are You a MAG Mastermind" trivia game for those who want to test their regional knowledge. MAG staff will be on hand to answer questions and provide information and materials about MAG programs. Look for us on the west side of Central, just north of Earll Drive.

**For more information contact Jason Stephens, MAG Public Involvement Planner, (602) 254-6300.**

### **MAG Holds Elderly Mobility Forums**

If you're an older adult concerned about getting around in the Valley, or if you are a son, daughter, friend or care-giver of an older adult and are concerned about their transportation needs, you might want to attend one of three MAG forums on "Getting Around Safe & Sound." The forums will be held from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. on the following dates:

- **Monday, April 30th** – Burton Barr Central Library, 1221 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix
- **Tuesday, May 1st** – R.H. Johnson Social Hall, 19803 R.H. Johnson Blvd., Sun City West
- **Thursday, May 3rd** – Mesa Senior Center, 247 N. MacDonald, Mesa

The forums will examine a variety of senior mobility issues. No fee is required and refreshments will be provided. Seating is limited – please RSVP by Friday, April 20th at (602) 452-5002 or by e-mail to [bmead@mag.maricopa.gov](mailto:bmead@mag.maricopa.gov).

**For more information contact Suzanne Quigley, MAG Human Services Planner, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Next Regional Council Meeting**

The next Regional Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 25, 2001 at 5:00 p.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Ave., Suite 200. Agenda items are expected to include a recommendation for the designation of the CANAMEX Corridor through the MAG region; an update on the MAG Elderly Mobility project; a report on the MAG Regional Transportation Plan; and the Final Report for the MAG Incarceration of Municipal Prisoners Working Group.

**For more information contact Dennis Smith, MAG Assistant Director, (602) 254-6300.**